

The Catholic Series.

THE
OF ART:
AN ORATION ON THE RELATION BETWEEN
PLASTIC ARTS AND NATURE.

BY

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Translated from the German,

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"The artist should indeed, above all things, imitate that spirit of nature, which working at the core of things, speaks by form and shape, as if by symbols; and only in so far as he seizes this spirit, and vitally imitates it, has he himself created anything of truth."—Pages 9-10.

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P R E F A C E.

In a time like the present, when art has become, so much more than formerly, the affair of all,—when the general interest is directed and instructed by a commission of such accomplished men,—the Translator has thought that an English version of a celebrated Essay, by one of the greatest of modern philosophers, could not but be welcome; and the more so, as the mode in which the subject is treated is very different from that in which it has heretofore been handled by English critics.

In England there has been but little endeavour, since the last generation, after a scientific system of Esthetics. Perhaps the want of decided success in the authors who then treated of taste, though rather to be attributed to the hostile influences of the time, has indisposed the public mind to the investigation itself. But with better times we may

hope for a more favourable result; and although a permanent good can only be hoped for from a course of investigation which proceeds from that point of view from which the subject is generally contemplated, still the study of that to which a different set of intellectual relations has elsewhere led, may not be without use; and the accompanying Essay is offered to the English Public, rather as a guiding light than as a substitute for individual effort, in cultivating that field of research which is already in their hands.

It is impossible ever to transplant the philosophy of any country from its natural ground to a foreign one. The conditions of its life are so inextricably interwoven with forms of thought, which cannot be transplanted with it, that such an endeavour must be ever fruitless.

To this cause is to be attributed, more than to any other, the failure which, on the whole, attended Coleridge's endeavour in this direction,

Our English philosophy must proceed in an organic development from Locke, Hume, and Berkeley, as the German one did from Leibnitz, Kant, and Fichte, to Schelling and Hegel.

The characteristic difference between this Essay and all that has appeared in England on the subject, is, that it proceeds in its investigation from the idea of art itself; whereas our criticism is rather founded upon a confused consideration of its works.

PREFACE.

From the prevalence of the latter method among us is to be explained the vagueness of determination when the ideal or the characteristic is to be treated of, and that general want of reference to principles, under which our artistic criticism for the most part labours.

The great light which is shed upon these points in the accompanying Essay cannot escape the most cursory observation. It was delivered by the Author as an Oration, before the Royal Academy of Sciences, at Munich, on the 12th of October, 1807, in celebration of the birthday of the King of Bavaria, and is, in fact, an application to art of Schelling's Philosophy of Nature. Maintaining, as he does, a creative purpose in nature (*anima mundi*), he treats the creative power of genius in art as its intellectual correlative.

It may be asked, of what service can such abstract theories be to art? Has not art brought forth all its wonders without them, and may not we do as well without them as other times have done?

It is very true that the works of genius do not wait for an intelligible theory of their production; indeed, that production must ever precede the theory which shall account for and explain it. Neither is it pretended that theory can ever stand in the place of genius; but when once the true one is discovered, it affords a test and criterion of all works within its sphere.

A true and scientific system of deductive logic is not necessary to reasoning; but, when once discovered, it acts as a corrective to individual errors, and offers a far better standard than the most general assent. The true theory of art stands in precisely the same relation to its works.

Even supposing that the true theory is not yet discovered, still the endeavour after it, when once general, frees art from individual views and likings, and forces men to give more cogent reasons for their judgments than a mere assurance of their appreciation of its works.

To contribute in any way to so desirable a state of things is the ardent wish of the Translator, and his inducement thus to appear before the Public,

Fully aware of the many shortcomings in the execution of the Work, he would fain say something in extenuation of them.

There is a peculiar difficulty in translating any philosophical work from the German. Words which, relatively to systems in that country, have a clear and determinate meaning, become vague and deficient in force and exactness when translated into another language, in which those systems are wanting.

From this cause the Translator feels that those faults may be in some measure imputed to the following version; but he hopes that a candid consideration of the difficulty, nay, almost impossibility, of avoiding them will in some degree

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moderate that censure to which they would otherwise be justly exposed.

Of one thing he feels certain—viz., that those who can best appreciate the importance of the Work will be most lenient in their treatment of him who has introduced them to it.

NOTE.—The English reader, who may wish to become more intimately acquainted with the general aspect of Schelling's Philosophy, is referred to Johnston's translation of Tenneman's *Handbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*.

ON THE RELATION
BETWEEN THE
PLASTIC ARTS AND NATURE.

FESTIVE days like the present, adorned with the name of a king, that, like a magic word, calls forth joyful emotions in all hearts, seem of themselves, where words only can celebrate them, to lead to the contemplation of the universal and most worthy; thus joining the hearens in intellectual sympathy, as the patriotic feelings of the day have already in loyalty.

For what more noble thing can we be indebted to the rulers of the earth, than for the preservation for us of the peaceful enjoyment of the excellent and beautiful; so that we cannot call to mind their good deeds, nor contemplate the general happiness, without being immediately led up to the universally human?

Such a day could scarcely be distinguished by a more appropriate delight than by the opening to public view a true and great work of plastic art; nor less appropriate seems the attempt, suited also to this place, (devoted to the sciences alone,) to develop the nature of art itself, and in a manner to display the creation of its works before the intellectual eye.

How much, and for how long a time, has art been felt, thought upon, and judged of! How, then, could the speaker hope, in such an assembly of enlightened connoisseurs and

penetrating judges, to give the subject new charms, did he not discard foreign ornament, and rather reckon on a portion of their general favour and consideration for the thing itself?

Other subjects must be elevated by eloquence, or, if there is anything extraordinary in their nature, be made credible by exhibition.

Art has at first this advantage—that it appeals to sight; and doubts of a perfection above the common measure, that might otherwise be heard, are met by the fulfilment; as that which in the idea could not be conceived, here steps embodied before our eyes.

But, on the other hand, the speaker is supported by the consideration that the many theories which have been formed on this subject have all far too little fallen back upon the first principle of art; for most artists, although they all should imitate nature, seldom arrive at a conception of the being of nature itself.

Connoisseurs, and thinkers too, mostly find it more convenient, on account of the greater unapproachableness of nature, to reduce their theories more from the contemplation of the soul than from a philosophy of nature; but such theories are generally much too jejune; they make general remarks of real excellence and truth on art, but for the plastic artist are generally ineffective, and in practice totally fruitless.

Plastic art should, according to the ancient saying, be a dumb poetry. The author of this criticism, doubtless, meant thereby that art should, like poetry, express intellectual thoughts—conceptions whose origin is the soul only; not by speech, but, like silent nature, by shape, by form, by sensuous and independent works. Plastic art, then, evidently stands as a connecting link between the soul and nature, and can only be conceived as their vital synthesis.

As plastic art has, indeed, its relation to the soul, in common with poetry and all other arts, that relation in which it stands to nature, and by which it should be like creative power, remains as its peculiar character; and thus only on

this relation can a theory ground itself, that can be satisfying to the understanding, as well ■ advancing and valuable to art.

We hope, then, by contemplating plastic art in its relation to its true antitype and source, to be able to add something not yet acknowledged to its theory; to give ■ more exact-determination and illustration of its conceptions; but chiefly to set forth the inner connexion of the entire temple of art in the light of a higher necessity.

But has not science always acknowledged this relation? Is not every theory of recent times founded upon the very principle that art should be the imitator of nature? Indeed it has been so; but what could this broad and general principle profit the artist, among the many meanings of the conception, nature, and while there are as many views of this conception ■ there are ways of life? To some, nature is nothing more than the dead aggregate of an indeterminate host of objects, or the space in which things are packed as in a case; to another, merely the ground whence he draws his nourishment and sustenance. To the inspired inquirer alone is nature the holy and ever-creating primal energy of the world, which begets and actively produces all things from itself.

That principle would, indeed, have a higher import, if it taught art to imitate this creative energy; but there can be little doubt how it was meant to be understood, when one is acquainted with the general condition of the sciences at the time of its appearance. Strange, indeed, would it be, if that which denied all life in nature should hold that life up for imitation to art. Of them, the words of the deep-thinking man were true:—"Your lying philosophy has annihilated nature; wherefore do you demand that we should imitate her—that you may have the new pleasure of exerting the same tyranny on her disciples?" ■

Nature was to them, not merely ■ dumb, but a totally dead image, in whose inmost recesses was implanted ■ living word; ■ hollow scaffolding of forms, from which an equally hollow

image was to be transferred to canvass or marble. This was, indeed, the right theory for the more ancient and rough races; as they saw not the godlike in nature, they derived idols from her; while for the penetrating Hellenist, who everywhere recognised the traces of this living creative energy, nature, produced gods indeed.

Should, then, the disciple of nature imitate, without distinction, all things in her, and in each thing, all things? Only beautiful objects should be reproduced, and only the beautiful and perfect in them. Thus the principle would be more narrowly determined; but at the same time it would be maintained that in nature the perfect is mixed with the imperfect, the beautiful with the unlovely.

How, then, could he who looks upon nature with an eye of slavish imitation distinguish the one from the other? The very characteristic of the imitator is to give rather the faults than the excellences of his original, because they offer greater facility and apparent resemblance; and thus we see that imitators of nature in this sense have oftener, and with greater partiality, imitated the hateful than the beautiful.

If we look upon things, regarding not their essence, but merely the empty and derived form, they answer not to our souls; we must engraft on them our own feelings and mind, if we would they should respond to us. But what is the perfection of a thing? Nought else but the creative life in it—its power of asserting its own individuality. Never, then, with him to whom nature appears dead, will that divine, and, as it were, chymical process, succeed, from which, as from a purifying fire, flows the pure gold of beauty.

The general aspect of this relation to nature was not altered when the unsatisfying character of the principle became more generally felt; not even by the noble foundation of new theory and knowledge laid by J. Winkelmann. He, indeed, gave the soul her whole sphere of action in art, and elevated it from unworthy dependence to a more intellectual freedom.

Impressed in the most lively manner by the beauty of form

in the works of antiquity, he taught that the production of the ideal; and nature more elevated than the actual, with intellectual expression, was the highest aim of art. ✓

We will inquire, however, in what sense this surpassing the actual was by the greater number understood; and it is evident that with this theory also nature was still looked upon as mere product, and things as lifeless presences, and that thereby the idea of living and creative nature was by no means awakened.

Thus neither could these ideal forms be animated by any positive conceptions of their being or nature.

If those of common life were dead for the dead beholder, these were not less so. If no self-development of the former were possible, neither was there of the latter.

The object of imitation was altered, but imitation remained; the lofty works of antiquity took the place of nature, from which the student busied himself to take the outward form, but without the spirit that filled it. They, indeed, are unapproachable—more so than the works of nature; they leave us also colder than nature, unless we bring with us that intellectual eye which can penetrate their veil and perceive the living energy within them.

On the other hand, however, artists since this time have acquired a certain ideal aim and notions of a more than material beauty; but these notions were but beautiful words, to which no deeds corresponded. If the earlier practice of art begat bodies without souls, this theory taught the secret of the soul, but not that of the body. The theory, as is usual, passed over with hurried steps to the other side. The living mid-point was not yet found.

Who dare say that Winkelmann knew not the highest beauty? but it appears with him in its discovered elements, on the one side as beauty of conception, which flows from the soul, and on the other as beauty of form. But what active effective link binds the two together, or by what energy are the soul and body together created as it ■■■■ at once, in one

breath? If this is not in the power of art, ■ it is in that of nature, it can indeed create nothing.

This living synthesis Winkelmann did not point out; he did not teach how the form should be begotten of the conception; thus art pursued that method which we might call the retrogressive, striving from the form to arrive at the essence.

But the absolute is not thus arrived at; by a mere gradation of the limited the illimitable will never be reached. Thus all works which have taken their commencement from the form, betray, however elaborate in that direction, an inextinguishable vacuity at the very point where we expect the perfect, the essential, the ultimate.

The miracle by which the finite should be elevated to the infinite, and by which humanity should be deified, is wanting.

The magic circle is drawn, but the spirit which should be forced into it appears not, regardless of the voice of one who imagines a creation possible by mere form.

Far be it from us to impute the blame to the spirit of that accomplished man, whose immortal theory and revelation of the beautiful was rather the occasion than the effective cause of this tendency of art. Holy, as that of an universal benefactor, be to us his memory! He stood like a mountain in elevated solitude: through his whole time no answering sound, no movement of life, no pulse beat in the whole wide kingdom of science answering his strivings; when his true companions arrived, even then was the excellent one snatched away.

In intellect and perception he belonged not to his own time, but either to antiquity or to that time whose creator he was—the present.

He gave by his theory the first foundation to that general structure of the knowledge and science of the ancients which later times have commenced to build upon. He first conceived the thought to look upon the works of art in the manner and after the laws of eternal works of nature; for before and after him, all foreign human action was looked upon and treated as the work of arbitrary will. His spirit was among us, like a

soft-breathing wind, which cleared from clouds the heaven of ancient art for us; so that we now, with clear eyes, and hindered by no mist, behold its stars. How must he have felt the emptiness of his time! Had we, indeed, any other ground than his true feeling of friendship and inextinguishable longing after its enjoyments, we should have justification enough for this word in enforcement of an intellectual love for this accomplished man, of classic life and classic activity; and if he felt another longing which could not be stilled, it was towards a more intimate acquaintance with nature; he expresses repeatedly to his intimate friends, in the last years of his life, that his last observations would go from art to nature; thus in a manner anticipating the deficiency; and that he had failed to perceive in the harmony of the universe the highest beauty which he did in God.

Nature meets us everywhere; at first, in forms more or less hard and undeveloped; like that serious and quiet beauty, that wins not the attention by striking peculiarities—which attracts not the eye of all.

How can we, as it were, intellectually melt these apparently hard forms, that the pure energy of things may flow together with that of our souls, and both gush forth together in one stream?

We must look beyond form in order to gain an intelligible, living, and true perception of it. Contemplate the most beautiful forms, and what remains when you have denied in them the effective principle? Nothing but mere abstract qualities, such as extension and the relations of space. Does the position of one portion of matter in the neighbourhood of another contribute, in any degree whatever, to its inward essence, or the contrary; evidently the latter. Proximity makes not the form, but the kind of proximity; this, however, can only be determined by a positive force opposed to the disjunctivity, and subordinating the plurality of the parts to the unity of one conception, from the force which works in the crystal even to that which, like a soft magnetic stream, gives

to the particles of matter in the human frame such arrangement and mutual interdependence that the conception of essential unity and beauty becomes visible.

But that we may fully comprehend the essential in form, we must regard it, not merely as an active principle in general, but as intellect and effective science.

All unity can be no other than intellectual in its nature and origin; and to what tends all investigation of nature, save to the discovery of this same science in her? For that in which there is no understanding cannot be the object of understanding. The perceptionless cannot be perceived. The science through which nature acts is, indeed, in no point like human science, which is interwoven with a reflection on itself; in its conception differs not from action, nor intention from fulfilment.

Thus rough matter strives, as it were blindly, after regular shape, and unconsciously assumes pure stereometric forms, which, indeed, belong to the realm of conception, and are somewhat of spirituality in matter. The stars are instinct with the most exalted science of number and measure, which they, without a conception of these things, put into practice in their movements. More evident, though not self-conscious, appears the living perception in animals, which we therefore accomplish innumerable works, far nobler than themselves, without deliberation on their part; the bird, enraptured with music, excels itself in soul-filling tones; the small, art-gifted creature, without practice or instruction, perfects light works of architecture; but all are led by an overpowering spirit, which lightens indeed in solitary flashes of knowledge, but nowhere comes forth as the full sun, as it does in man.

This effective science is, in nature and art, the bond between conception and form, between body and soul. Every single thing is preceded by an eternal conception schemed in the infinite understanding; but by what means does this conception pass into actuality and embodiment? Only through the creative intelligence, which is necessarily combined with the

• Infinite understanding, as that essence, which comprehends the idea of immaterial beauty, is combined with that which embodies it in the mind of the artist.

• If that artist is to be accounted happy and before all praiseworthy, to whom the gods have granted this creative spirit, so will that work of art appear in the same measure excellent, in which this unalloyed energy of creation and activity of nature is shown us as in an outline.

• It has long been perceived that, in art, all things are not performed with ■ full consciousness; that with the conscious activity an unconscious energy must unite itself; that the perfect union and reciprocal interpenetration of the two is that which accomplishes the highest in art; works wanting this seal of unconscious power are recognised by the evident want of a self-sufficing life, independent of the producing life; while on the contrary, where this operates, art gives to its productions, together with the highest clearness of the understanding, that inscrutable reality by which they resemble works of nature.

The position of the artist, in relation to nature, should be continually made clear by the declaration that art, really to be art, should at first withdraw itself from nature, and only in the last accomplishment return to her. The true meaning of this seems to be no other than the following:—In all things in nature the living principle appears only blindly effective;—if it were so with the artist, he would not be distinguishable from nature itself. If it were his wish consciously to subordinate himself to nature, and to repeat things present with ■ slavish truth, he would produce masks (*larvæ*) indeed, but no works of art. Thus he must remove himself from the result, from the creature, that he may elevate himself to the creative energy, and spiritually seize on that.

By this means he elevates himself into the region of pure ideas; he forsakes the creature, that he may regain it with thousand-fold interest, and in this sense certainly to return to nature.

The artist should indeed, above all things, imitate that spirit

of nature, which, working in the core of things, speaks by form and shape, as if by symbols; and only in so far as he seizes this spirit, and vitally imitates it, has he himself created anything of truth! For works which are the result of the mere connexion of even beautiful forms would themselves be without all beauty, as that which gives beauty to the whole cannot be form. It is beyond form—it is the essential, the universal, the aspect and expression of the in-dwelling spirit of nature.

We can now scarce doubt what is to be thought of this so universally demanded, so-called idealising of nature in art. This demand seems to have originated in that manner of thought which conceives the actual not to be truth, beauty, and goodness, but their contrary. If the actual were, indeed, opposed to truth and beauty, the artist would be obliged, not to elevate and idealise, but rather to dispense with and destroy it, that he might create something true and beautiful.

But how could anything beside the true be possible? And what is the beautiful, if not full and perfect being? What higher aim could art then have than the representation of the actually existing in nature; and how could it affect to surpass the so-called actual nature, when it must ever remain behind her? Does art ever give to its works sensuous, actual life? This statue breathes not, is animated by no pulsation, is warmed by no blood; but both this professed surpassing, and this apparent inferiority, appear the consequences of one and the same principle, so soon as we place the aim of art in the imitation of the actually existent in nature.

The works of art are only in appearance and on the surface animated; in nature, the vital principle seems to penetrate more deeply, and entirely to unite itself with the material; but also we are not taught by the constant change of matter, and by the universal fate of ultimate dissolution, the unessential character of this union, and that it is no perfect intermixture?

Thus art presents, indeed, in its merely superficial animation of its works, the non-essential as the non-essential.

How is it, that to every cultivated perception the so-called imitation of the actual, though carried almost to illusion, appears in the highest degree untrue—indeed, has the appearance of a spectre; while a work in which the idea is predominant appeals to that perception with the full energy of truth—indeed, first sets us in the truly actual world? Whence does this arise, if not from the more or less clear conception that affirms the idea to be the only living power in nature, and that all else is beingless and empty shadow?

By the same principle are explained all the opposite cases which are adduced as instances of the surpassing of nature by art. When it detains the fleeting course of years, when it unites the energy of full-developed manhood with the grace of early youth, or presents a mother, grown-up sons, and daughters, in the full possession of energetic beauty, what does it but dissolve that which is unessential—time?

If in accordance with the remark of the discerning critic, every growth of nature has but one moment of perfect beauty, we may also say that it has but one moment of full existence.

In this moment it is what it is in eternity; besides this, there is but an approach thereto and a falling therefrom.

Art, in that it presents the object in this moment, withdraws it from time, and causes it to display its pure being in the form of its eternal life.

So soon as we have deprived form by our theories of all that is positive and essential, it must appear as restrictive and in a manner hostile to the essence; and the same theory which had produced the false and weak idealising must tend necessarily at the same time to the formless in art. Form would indeed be restrictive of the being or essence if it were present independent of it; but it exists by and through the essence; and how could that feel itself restricted by that which it creates? It might indeed be injured by form which was forced upon it, but never by that which flows from itself; much rather must it rest content in this, and therein recognise its self-sufficing and self-included nature.

Determinate form is in nature never negative, but always affirmative; in the general way, you think of the form of a thing ■ ■ limit within which it is contained; but if you regard the creative energy, you will perceive that it is a measure which it gives itself, and in which it appears as a truly thinking power. For universally is the power of self-restriction considered an excellence, as indeed one of the highest.

In the same manner most persons regard the single, or separate, ■ negative—viz., that it is not the whole or all; but nothing separate becomes ■ by its limitation, but by the in-dwelling energy by which it assumes its own entirety, in opposition to the whole.

As this energy of singleness, and thus also of individuality, presents itself as the living character, the negative conception of it necessarily introduced into art an unsufficing and false view of the characteristic.

Dead, and of intolerable hardness, were that art, which would represent the empty shell or limitation of the individual: we desire certainly to see, not the individual—we desire more—the living idea thereof.

When, however, the artist recognises the aspect and being of the in-dwelling creative idea, and produces that, he makes the individual a world in itself—a species, an eternal type; he who has seized upon the essential need not fear hardness and severity, for they are the conditions of life.

Nature, which appears in her full development as the highest-milkness, we see tending in every single product towards determination, and is at first, before all else, hard and confined.

✓ As the entire creation is but a work of the highest manifestation, the artist must first deny himself, and descend into the particular, not shunning the remoteness nor the pain, nay, torment of form. From her first works' nature is throughout characteristic: the power of fire, the flash of light, she conceals in the hard stone; the pure soul of melody in severe metal; even on the threshold of life, and while meditating on organic

form, she sinks, overpowered by the might of form, into petrification.

The life of the plant consists in a quiet receptivity; but to what accurate and severe limits is this passive life confined?

In the animal kingdom the conflict between the life and form seems first to begin; indeed, her first works she conceals in hard shells; and when these are laid aside, by the constructive instinct, she joins the animated world to the domain of crystallizations; at last she steps forth more boldly and freely, and active living characters appear, which are the same through the whole species. Art, indeed, cannot commence so deep as nature.

If beauty is everywhere present, there are also different degrees of appearance and development of the being or essence; and thus of beauty; but art requires a certain fulness of beauty, and will not strike a single tone or sound, nor even a separate accord, but the whole full-voiced harmony of beauty at once. Therefore does it seize immediately, and with the greatest delight, on the highest and most fully developed—the human form—for, it is not granted to art to embrace the immeasurable whole, and as in all other creatures merely fulgurations, but in man alone full and entire being, without fault appears, it is not only allowed, but called upon to behold all nature in man.

But even for the very reason that it here assembles all in one point, it repeats her entire manifoldity, and retraces in an inner circle the same path that she proceeded on in her wide circumference.

Here arises the demand on the artist, first, to be true in the particular, that the whole may appear perfect and beautiful. Here it is to wrestle with that creative spirit of nature which in the world of man spreads character and form in infinite manifoldity; and not in loose and weak, but in strong and courageous, conflict.

A constant practical perception of that by which the qualities of things become positive must keep him from emptiness,

weakness, and inward nonentity, before he can venture, by still higher connexion and ultimate intermelting of manifold forms, to arrive at the highest beauty in forms of the greatest simplicity, and of infinite fulness and content.

Only by the perfection of form can form be annihilated; and this is certainly, in the characteristic, the ultimate aim of art.

As, however, an apparent coincidence is to the empty soul of more easy attainment, however internally worthless, so in art is the quickly attained external harmony void of all fulness of content; and thus theory and instruction have to counterbalance the unintellectual imitation of beautiful forms, and chiefly that inclination to an effeminate and characterless art, which indeed, gives itself higher names, but only thereby covers its incapacity of fulfilling the first conditions of art.

That elevated beauty, in which the fulness of form annihilates form itself, was adopted by the new theory of art, after Winkelmann, not only as the highest, but as the only standard. But the deep ground on which it rests was overlooked, it happened that from the essence of an all-affirming idea a negative was conceived.

Winkelmann compared beauty to water drawn from the bosom of the spring, which the less taste it had, the purer it was esteemed.

It is true that the highest beauty is characterless; but is so, as we say of the universe, that it has no determinate dimension, neither length, breadth, nor depth, because it contains all in like infinity; or that the art of creative nature is formless, because it is subjected to no form. In this, and in no other sense, can we say that the art of the Hellenists, in its last perfection, elevated itself to the characterless. But it did not tend immediately to this. From the restraints of nature it elevated itself first to a godlike freedom; no light, self-sown seed, but a deep-planted kernel was necessary to the growth of that heroic plant.

Only mighty emotions of the feelings, only deep-stirrings of

the fancy, by the conception of an all-ruling power in nature, could implant that unconquerable energy in art, with which it, from the harsh and confined severity of the early forms, to the works of overflowing, sensuous grace, departed not from truth, and intellectually created the highest essential reality which it is granted to mortals to behold.

As their tragedy commences with the great character in morals, so their plastic art began with the severity of nature; the stern goddess of Athens was its first and only Muse. This epoch is marked by that style which Winkelmann denominates the harsh and severe, from which the next, or high style, could only develop itself by the elevation of the characteristic to the noble and simple. Thus, in figures of the most perfect or godlike natures, not only must every fulness of form of which human nature is capable be present, but this presence must be of such a kind that we could ourselves imagine it in the world—viz., the lower qualities, or those referring to some subordinate peculiarity, must be comprehended under a higher, and all under a highest, in which they, ■ particulars, reciprocally counteract each other, but in being and energy still subsist. Thus, though we cannot call that high and self-sufficing beauty characteristic, in ■ far ■ we thereby denote confinement or limitation of appearance, still the characteristic works imperceptibly in it, ■ in the crystal, which, though translucent, has not the less its own texture; every characteristic element weighs, though ever ■ softly, and tends to produce the elevated equipoise of beauty.

The outward basis of all beauty is the beauty of form; but as form cannot be present without essence, so wherever form is, is also, in visible or appreciable presence, character.

Characteristic beauty, then, is beauty in its parts, from which beauty is developed as its fruit.

The essence, indeed, outgrows the form; but, even then, the characteristic remains the ever-operative groundwork of beauty.

That most excellent critic, to whom the gods have granted

who preferred to give even small particulars of the character-
 istic, to appearing uniform, lifeless, and unreal; he has not
 only understood to produce these, but also to break their uni-
 formity by a difference of expression.

Thus, although character can express itself in the quiet and
 balance of form, it is in its activity that it is first actually vital.
 By character we figure to ourselves an unity of many energies,
 which constantly operates to produce a certain balance and
 determinate measure for them, which is corresponded to, when
 unagitated, by a similar balance of form. But if this living
 unity must display itself in action and motion, it must be when
 the energies are aroused by some cause to tumult and step out
 of their equipoise. Every one knows that this is the case with
 the passions.

Here we are met by the well-known demand of theory, which
 desires that the expression of passion should be moderated, as
 much as possible, in the actual outburst; that the beauty of
 form be not thereby injured.

We believe that we must rather reverse this rule, and ex-
 press it thus: that passion must be moderated by beauty itself; for
 it is much to be feared that the desired moderation will be
 understood negatively, while the true demand is, that a posi-
 tive force should be opposed to that of the passions.

For, as virtue consists, not in the absence of the passions,
 but in the power of the spirit over them, so beauty is not pre-
 served by the banishment or moderation of them, but by the
 power of beauty over them. The power of the passions must
 actively display itself; it must be evident that they might rage
 ungovernably, but that they are repressed by force of charac-
 ter, and confined to the forms of firm and fixed beauty, as the
 waves of a stream, which break upon the brinks that they ever
 fill, but never over-pass.

Otherwise this enterprise of moderation might be compared
 to that of those wretched moralists, who, the better to govern
 man, corrupt his nature, and banish everything positive from his
 actions so completely, that the people gloat on the appearance

of a great crime; that they may refresh themselves by the aspect of something positive.

In nature and art, the essence first strives after actuality or expression of itself in the particular; therefore, the greatest severity of forms shows itself at the commencement of each; for without limitation the limitless could not appear. If there were no severity, mildness could not exist; and if unity must be felt, it can only be by force of individuality, isolation, and antagonism. At first, therefore, the creative spirit appears lost in the form, unapproachably locked up, and, even in the great, still austere; the more, however, it succeeds in uniting in one creature its whole fulness, the more it parts with its austerity; and where it has fully developed the form, that it rests in and is satisfied with it, the more it contains itself within it, and in a manner to rejoice, and begins to move in soft lines.

This is the state of the most beautiful flowers and fruits; where the pure vehicle stands perfect, the spirit of nature becomes free from its bonds, and feels its relation to the soul.

As by a faint blush rising over the whole countenance, the approaching soul announces itself; as yet it is not there, but all things prepare themselves, by the soft play of tender movement, for its reception; the rigid outlines melt, and moderate themselves into soft ones; a lovely essence, that is neither sensuous nor spiritual, but yet incomprehensible, spreads itself over the form, and enfolds all the outlines and tortuosities of the parts.

This essence, incomprehensible, as we have said, and yet appreciable by all, is what the Greeks called "charis," and we grace. Where, in a fully developed form, grace appears, there, on the side of nature, is the work perfect; all demands are fulfilled.

Here already soul and body are in perfect harmony; body is the form, and grace the soul; not the soul in itself, but the soul of form, the soul of nature.

Art may linger on this point; nay, stand in it; for already from one side is its whole task accomplished. The pure image

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of beauty, arrested at this stage of development, is the goddess of love. But the beauty of the soul itself, incorporated in bodily grace, this is the highest deification of nature. The spirit of nature is but apparently opposed to the soul, and is in fact the instrument of its manifestation. It forms, indeed, the antithesis of things, but only that thereby the unity of being, as the highest grace and atonement of all powers, should ensue.

All other creatures are supported by the spirit of the world, and thereby maintain their individuality. In man alone, as in mid point, rises the soul, without which the world would be as nature without the sun.

The soul, then, is not the individualising principle in man, but that by which he elevates himself above all selfishness; it is that by which he is capable of self-sacrifice and disinterested love, and, what is the highest still, of the contemplation and perception of the being of things, and thus of art.

The soul is not concerned with matter, nor immediately connected with it, but only with the vital spirit, the life of things. Although appearing in the body, it is free from the body, the consciousness of which only hovers over it like a light dream, in the most beautiful shapes, by which it is not disturbed. It is no property, it is no possession, nor anything of limits; it knows not, but is itself knowledge; it is not good, but goodness itself; it is not beautiful, but is beauty in its essence.

Primarily or secondarily, the soul of the artist shows itself, indeed, in his work, by the invention in the particulars and in the whole, when it hovers as unity in peaceful stillness over it. It should, however, be visible in the performance as the original power of thought, when human beings, fully informed with an idea, offered to a worthy contemplation, or as in-dwelling and essential goodness.

Both find their evident expression even in the most peaceful condition, but more lively, however, when the soul displays itself in action and opposition; and, it is chiefly the passions which destroy the peace of life, it is universally received, that



the beauty of the soul chiefly shows itself by peaceful power in the storm of the passions.

But here an important distinction must be made. The soul must not be called upon to moderate those passions which are merely the outburst of lower powers of nature, nor can it be displayed in opposition to them; for, where consciousness still strives with them, the soul itself has not yet risen.

Those passions must be moderated by the nature of man, by the power of the spirit of nature.

But there are higher occasions, when not merely a single power, but when the conscious spirit itself, breaks through all restraint; occasions when even the soul itself is subjected to the bond which joins it to its sensuous existence—to the pain which should be unknown to its godlike nature; when man finds he has to do, not merely with powers of nature, but with moral energies, and feels himself attacked at the very core of his being—when innocent error hurries him into crime, and consequently into misery, and the deep-felt injustice calls the holiest feelings of humanity to revolt. This is the in all truly, and, in an exalted sense, tragic situations, as in those which are offered us by the tragedies of antiquity. If the blind energies of passion are aroused, the self-conscious spirit is also present, as the preserver of beauty; but if the spirit itself is hurried away by an irresistible force, what power here protect, watching over it, the holy beauty? Or, if the soul suffers, how can it save itself from torment and desecration? Arbitrarily to restrain the energy of pain, of tumultuous feeling, were to sin against the aim and intent of art, and would betray a want of feeling and soul in the artist himself. In that beauty, based upon grand and constant forms, has become characteristic, art has prepared for itself the means of manifesting the whole greatness of feeling, without destruction of the symmetry.

For, where beauty rests upon mighty forms, as upon irremovable pillars, a very small alteration of their relations, and one which scarcely affects the beauty itself, allows to infer the great force which was necessary to bring it about.

Still ■■■ is pain sanctified by grace. It is necessary to the being of grace that it should be unconscious of itself; but as it cannot be arbitrarily acquired, so neither can it be arbitrarily lost; when ■■■ insupportable torment, when madness, inflicted by the avenging gods, hurries away consciousness and thought, it still stands by, as the protecting spirit, and prevents the suffering form from enacting anything ungraceful or unworthy of humanity; ■■■ that if it falls, it falls as a pure and unspotted sacrifice.

Not yet the soul itself, but a presentiment of it, it produces, by natural means, what that does by a divine energy, in that it changes rigidity, nay, death itself, into beauty.

Still this grace, though preserved in circumstances of the greatest difficulty, would be dead without its glorification by the soul.

But what expression can it have in this state? It delivers itself from pain, and steps forth victorious, not conquered, in dissolving its connexion with sensuous existence.

The spirit of nature may call forth all its powers for its support; the soul enters not upon this conflict, but its presence softens the storm of even the painfully struggling life.

Every external force can deprive of external goods only, but cannot reach the soul; can destroy a temporal connexion, but not dissolve the eternal one of a truly divine love.

Not hard or feelingless, nor relinquishing love itself, it rather displays it in pain, ■■■ the sense which outlives sensuous existence, and thus elevates itself above the ruins of external life or fortune in divine glory.

This is the expression of the soul, which the sculptor of the Niobe has shown us in his statue. Every means of art, by which the terrible can be softened, are brought into action; grandeur of form, sensuous grace; even the nature of the subject softens the expression, in that the grief, surpassing all expression, neutralises itself; and the beauty, which it seemed almost impossible vitally to preserve, is saved from injury by the commencing torpor.

Yet what would all this be without the soul, and how does this manifest itself? We see upon the countenance of the mother, not the grief alone for the flower of her children, already stretched upon the ground—not the mortal agony on account of the still surviving youngest daughter, who has flown to her bosom—not anger against the cruel deities—much less, as has been pretended, ■ cold defiance. We see all this, but not for itself, but through the grief, the anger, and the anguish, streams the divine light, the everlasting love, as the last remaining feeling; in this is presented the mother as such, who, not being one, still is, and by an eternal link remains, united with the beloved ones.

Every one confesses that greatness, purity, and goodness of soul, have their sensuous expression; how were this conceivable, were there not, in the active principle of matter, a soul of related and similar essence?

Thus, in the delineation of the soul, there are again gradations in art, either as it is united to the merely characteristic, or visibly coalesces with the charming and graceful.

Who perceives not, in the tragedies of Eschylus, the same high morality to prevail that dwells so naturally in the works of Sophocles? but in the former it is enveloped in a severe veil, and communicates itself less to the whole, because the link of sensuous grace is wanting.

Yet from this severity, and from the still terrible graces of early art, could proceed the grace of Sophocles; and therewith that perfect interpenetration of the two elements, which leaves us in doubt whether it be the moral or sensuous grace which enchants us in the works of this poet.

This holds good of the productions of plastic art of the still severe style, in comparison with that of the later mildness. If grace, beside being the glorification of the spirit of nature, be also the means of connexion between moral goodness and sensuous appearance, it is self-evident that art must tend from all sides towards it, ■ its centre.

This beauty, which results from the perfect union of moral ■

goodness with sensuous grace, wherever we find it, seizes upon and enchants us with the power of a miracle. For as the spirit of nature elsewhere universally shows itself independent of, and, in certain sense, opposing the soul, so here it seems, by a voluntary coincidence, and, if by the inner fire of a divine love, to commingle with it; and the beholder is overtaken with sudden cleanness, by the remembrance of the original unity of the being of nature and of the soul, by the certainty that all antithesis or opposition is but apparent—that love is the bond of all being, and that pure goodness is the ground and signification of the whole creation. Here art seems to go beyond itself, and to make itself again a means to itself.

At this height, sensuous grace becomes merely veil and body to a still higher life; what was before a whole is treated as a part; and the highest relation of art to nature is thereby arrived at, in that it makes nature the medium of manifesting the soul in itself.

But if here, in the flower of art, all former stages repeat themselves (as in the flower, in the vegetable kingdom), still, on the other side we may perceive in what different direction art may proceed from this centre. In particular, the natural difference of the two forms of creative art shows itself, here, in its greatest force. For, in plastic, the highest seems necessarily (in that it manifests its ideas by corporeal things) to consist in the perfect equipoise between the soul and matter; if it gives to the latter the preponderance, it sinks beneath its own idea; but quite impossible does it seem to elevate the soul at the cost of matter, since thereby it must overpass itself.

The perfect sculptor will indeed, as Winkelmann says on occasion of the Belvedere Apollo, neither take more material than is necessary for the execution of his intellectual intent, nor, on the other hand, lay more energy in the soul than is at the same time expressed in the material; for even therein consists his art, that he expresses the intellectual corporeally.

Thus, sculpture can only attain its highest excellence in natures whose idea it brings with it—natures in which every

thing that they are in the idea, or soul, can at the same time be likewise in actuality; consequently, in godlike natures.

Thus, had no mythology preceded it, art would of itself have arrived at and invented gods, had it not found them; further, since the spirit, in its lower developments, has the same relation to matter that we have given the soul, in that it is the principle of action and movement, ■ matter is of rest and action, the law of moderation in the expression of the passions becomes one flowing from the grounds of its nature; but this law applies not only to the lower passions, but also to those, if the expression may be allowed, more elevated and divine, of which the soul is capable in rapture, devotion, or in reverence; thus, because the gods only are free from these passions, art would be attracted, from this side also, to the production of godlike natures.

Painting, however, seems to me quite differently constituted from sculpture; for the former represents not by bodily things, but by light and shade, by an immaterial, and in a certain sense intellectual means; it offers its works, too, by no means as the things themselves, and wishes them to be looked upon expressly as pictures; it therefore lays not that stress upon the material, in and for itself, that sculpture does; and appears, from this cause, when elevating the material above the spirit, to sink deeper below itself than, in a like case, sculpture does: on the other hand, it appears, with the greater propriety, to give an evident preponderance to the spirit.

In instances where it strives after the highest, it will certainly ennoble the passions by character, moderate them by grace, or manifest the power of the soul in them; but on the other hand, those higher passions which depend upon the relation of the soul to ■ superior being are, fully suited to its nature:

If sculpture fully weighs that power, by which a being exists externally, and by which it operates in nature, against that by which it operates inwardly, and lives as a soul, and thus shuts out mere passivity; even from matter, so, on the other

hand, may painting, here, moderate to the advantage of the soul the character of power and action, and change it into that of resignation and patience, through which, it appears, that man is more fitted to receive the impressions of the soul and general higher influences.

From this opposition alone, the predominance of sculpture in the ancient, and of painting in the modern world, explains itself, since the mode of thought in the former was thoroughly plastic, while that of the latter makes the soul the passive organ of higher relations. This also is evident, that the endeavour after the plastic in form and expression is by no means sufficing; that, before all things, it would be necessary, that we thought and felt in the antique manner, i. e. plastically. But if the deviation of plastic into the sphere of painting is an injury to art, so also is the subjugation of painting to the conditions and requirements of sculpture an imposed limitation, equally arbitrary. For, if the former, like gravitation, tends to ■ point, the latter may, like the creative light, fill the whole universe.

This unlimited universality of painting is proved by its history itself, and by the example of the greatest masters, who, without injury to the essential nature of their art, have yet brought every particular branch of it to perfection; so that the same continuous progress, which could be developed from the nature of the thing itself, we are also able to point out in the history of art.

Not, indeed, in exact order of time, but yet of fact. For thus ■ represented by Michael Angelo the mighty epoch of liberated art, in which its yet unrestrained energy manifests itself in gigantic offspring, in accordance with the plastic imagery of ■ symbolical antiquity; the earth, after the embrace of Uranos, first brought forth Titans and heaven-storming giants, before the soft reign of the tranquil gods arose.

Thus the last judgment, with which, as the brief abstract of his art, that intellectual giant filled the Sistino chapel, appears to remind us rather of the first ages of the earth than of the

last. Deeply attracted by the most occult grounds of organic and chiefly of human form; he avoided not the terrible; indeed, he rather sought it purposely, and called it up from its rest, in the dark operations of nature.

Want of tenderness, grace, and pleasantness, he replaces by the most extreme energy; and if he arouses terror by his delineations, it is the terror which, as the old fable says, the god Pan spreads around him, when he suddenly appears in the assemblies of man. Nature commonly produces the extraordinary by separation and exclusion of opposing qualities; thus it was necessary that earnestness and deep-thinking natural energy should, in the soul of Michael Angelo, outweigh the sense of grace and feeling, that the highest pure plastic energy might be manifested in modern art. After the softening of the first force and violent impulse of birth, the spirit of nature becomes more clear of soul, and the graces are born. Art arrived at this stage of development, after Leo. da Vinci, in Correggio, whose works the sensuous spirit is the effective groundwork of beauty; and this is not only apparent in the soft outlines of his figures; but also in his forms, which are most similar to the pure sensuous forms in the works of the ancients. In him blooms the true golden age of art, like that granted to the world under the mild rule of Saturn; here playful innocence, joyful desire, and childlike pleasure, smile from open and happy faces; here are celebrated the Saturnalia of art.

The general expression of this sensuous feeling is in the chiar-obscure, which Correggio has wrought out more than any other; for that which supplies to the artist the place of matter is shade; this is the material to which he must fasten the fleeting appearances of light and mind.

Thus, the more light and shade are melted into another, so that of both there results but one being, as it were body and soul, the more the spiritual appears corporeally—the more the corporeal is elevated to the rank of spirit.

After the limits of nature have been overcome, and the

exaggerated, the fruit of the first freedom, has been repressed, and form and configuration have been subdued with beauty by the presentiment of the soul, the heavens clear up—the softened earthly can unite itself with the heavenly, and this again with a softened humanity. Rastrello takes possession of joyful Olympus, and carries away with him from the earth into the assembly of the gods—of the immortal happy beings. The bloom of the most cultivated life, the perfume of fantasy, together with the roots of the intellect, breathe jointly from out his works; he is not more painter—he is, at the same time, poet and philosopher; the power of his soul stands at the side of wisdom; and, as he represents things, so are they ordered in the eternal necessity.

In him his art reached its summit; and as the pure equipoise of the divine and human can almost only be in one point, it is in his works that that unique impress is to be found.

From this point (that it might develop all possibility grounded in it) painting could only proceed in one direction, and whatever was undertaken by later revivals of art, and in whatever different direction endeavour has been made, but one seems to have succeeded in closing the circle of great masters with a kind of necessity. As the circle of the ancient fables of the gods closes with the modern one of Psyche, so could painting, by giving preponderance to the soul, accomplish one more stage in art, though not a higher one.

This was the aim of Guido Reni, and his became in a peculiar manner the painter of the soul; thus, it appears to us, must be interpreted his entire endeavour, so often uncertain, and which in many of his works loses itself in vagueness. The key to this may be found, and perhaps in but few other of his works, in his masterpiece, in the gallery of our king, there open to the wonder of us all. In the form of the ascending virgin is every plastic harshness and severity, to the last trace, destroyed; indeed, in her, painting itself appears, like the liberated Psyche, emancipated from hard forms to flutter its own pinions in glory.

Here is no being that, with ■ decided natural power, works externally on nature; everything in her expresses receptivity and quiet patience, even to that perishable flesh, whose peculiarity the Italian language expresses by *morbidezza*; quite different from that with which Raffaello endows his descending Queen of Heaven, as she appears to the adoring pope and saint.

If, indeed, there is any ground for the assertion, that the original of the female heads in Guido is the antique Niobe, the reason of the similarity lies, certainly not in intentional imitation; perhaps a similar endeavour may have led to like means. If the Florentine Niobe is the extreme of plastic, and the expression of passion therein, so our well-known picture is the extreme of painting, which here seems to lay aside the very want of shadow and obscurity, and ventures to work almost in pure light.

Yet though painting may be allowed, ■ account of its particular constitution, to lay an evident stress upon the soul, it would still be better for theory and doctrine ever to tend towards that synthesis from which alone art may ever be new begotten; since, on the side of the last-mentioned stage of development, it must ever be stationary, or deteriorate into a confined mannerism.

For, even that exalted passion is inconsistent with the idea of a perfectly energetic being, whose image and reflection it is the calling of art to display. A right feeling will ever rejoice in beholding ■ being individually, nobly, and, as far as possible, self-developed; yea, the Godhead would look down with pleasure upon ■ creature who, gifted with ■ pure soul, maintained, in the external world, the dignity of his nature by his sensuous active existence.

We have seen how the work of art, growing up from the depths of nature, commences with determination and confinement, develops internal infinity and fulness, and at last, purifying itself to grace, finally arrives at soul; but that which in the creative act of mature art is but one operation, must be conceived disjointedly.

No theory or rules can supply this spiritual power of production.

It is the pure gift of nature which here, for the second time, concludes herself; in that she, returning upon herself, invests the creature with her creative power.

But, in the great progress of art each gradation follows the other, until in the highest they all become one; even so can, in the particular, no pure culture arise that has not developed itself, in conformity with the law of nature, from the very seed and root.

The demand that art, like every other living thing, should proceed from the first beginnings, and, that it may vitally reproduce itself, should ever return back to these, may seem a hard doctrine, in an age to which it is so often said, that it may take the most perfect beauty from existing works of art, already at hand; and thus, with one step, arrive at the last excellence. Have we not already the excellent, the perfect—why, then, should we return to the initiative and undeveloped?

Had the great founders of modern art thought thus, we indeed should never have seen their wonders; before them also stood the works of antiquity—round statues, and bas-reliefs—which they might have directly transferred to their pictures.

But this appropriation of a beauty, not earned by itself, and so not understood, satisfies not an instinct of art, which tends directly to the original, and from this, in freedom and primal energy, develops for itself the beautiful.

They shunned not to appear simple, artless, and dry, beside those exalted ancients; nor to nourish art, long in the unapparent bud, until the time of grace arrived.

Whence comes it, that we still behold the works of those ancient masters, from Giotto to the teachers of Raffaele, with a kind of worship, and even partiality; if not, because the faithfulness of their endeavour, the grand seriousness of their quiet and voluntary confinement, forces from us our esteem and wonder?

In the same position that these stood to the ancients, stands the present race to them.

Their time and ours is joined by no vital tradition—by no link of organically-continued culture; we must reproduce art in their manner, but with peculiar individual energies, if we would be like them.

Even that after-summer of art, at the end of the 16th and commencement of the 17th centuries, was able indeed to call forth a few new flowers from the old stem, but no fruitful seed; much less to plant a new stem of art. But to set aside the works of full-developed art, and to hunt up its still simple and homely commencements, to imitate them, as some have wished, this were a new, and perhaps still greater, misunderstanding; this would not be going back to the original, and thus simplicity would become affectation and mere hypocritical show. But what prospect would the present time offer to an art, springing from a fresh germ and root? Art is, indeed, in our day, dependent upon the temper of the times, and who dare promise to such serious beginnings the praise of the present, while art scarce arrives, on the one side, to equal estimation with other means of extravagant luxury; and while, on the other, artists and amateurs, with a complete incapacity to comprehend nature, yet praise and demand the ideal?

Art arises from that most lively movement of the spirit and feelings which we call enthusiasm.

Everything which, from small or difficult beginnings, has risen to great power and height, has done so by enthusiasm; thus it is with kingdoms and states, arts and sciences.

The power of the individual is insufficient—the spirit only, which spreads itself through the whole body, can accomplish it; for, as the more tender plants are dependent upon the air and weather, so is art most completely on the general feeling; it stands in need of an universal enthusiasm for the elevated and beautiful; such as that which, in the Medicean age, like the warm breath of spring, called forth at once, and on the spot, all the great spirits; of a constitution, like that which

Pericles delineates in his praise of Athens, and which the mild government of a paternal ruler grants to us, far more surely and certainly than could any democracy; of a constitution, where every energy is in voluntary action, where every talent shows itself with joy, because every one is valued at his worth; where subserviency is shame, where the common place brings no praise, but where all strive after a high-placed and extraordinary aim.

Then only—when public life is animated by the same power by which art is elevated—then only can art expect advancement from it; for art cannot, without forfeiting the nobility of its nature, direct itself towards any outward consideration.

Art and science can only revolve on their own axes. The artist, like every intellectual operator, can only follow that law which God and nature have written in his heart,—no other.

No one can help him, he must help himself; neither can he be externally rewarded, for that which he has not brought forth for its own sake is worthless.

For this cause also, no one can even direct him, or prescribe the way for him in which he should walk. If he is greatly to be pitied when he has to combat with his time, he equally deserves contempt when he favours upon it. And how can he accomplish even this? Without a great and universal enthusiasm, there is but a sectarian and no public opinion—no fixed taste, no great idea of a whole people; but the voices of single and arbitrarily established judges pronounce upon merit; and art, which, in its elevation, is self-sufficing, favours for favour, and becomes a servant where it should be dictator.

To different ages is accorded a different inspiration. Dare we expect none for the present time, while the new, now self-forming world as it already exists, partly externally, partly internally, and in feeling, can no longer be estimated by all the measures of past opinion? While rather all things seem to call aloud for greater things, and thus to proclaim an entire renovation, should not that spirit, to which nature and history is again vitally opened, also give back to art its great objects?

To grope among the ashes of expired fires, and from them to wish again to kindle an universal flame, is a vain endeavour. A change alone, which shall take place in ideas themselves, is capable of elevating art from its exhausted state; a new knowledge, making possible a new faith, is alone capable of inspiring it to the work, by which in a new life it may reveal a glory like that of old.

An art, indeed, which should be in all respects the same as that of former centuries, will never recur, for nature never repeats herself.

Such a Raffaele will never be again; but another, who, in a like individual manner, will arrive at the highest in art.

Let only those primary conditions be not wanting, and re-animating art will, like the earlier, show forth in its first works the aim of its destiny. In the culture of the truly characteristic, it develops itself from a fresh original power; grace, though veiled, is still present, and in both is the soul already prefigured. Works that arise in such a manner are, even in their commencing incompleteness, necessary and immortal.

We venture to confess it, that in this hope of a new birth of an entirely characteristic art we have our fatherland chiefly in view. Did not, at the same time that art awakened in Italy, from our native Germany arise that vigorous growth of art in our great Albert Durer; how peculiarly German, and yet how closely related to those whose sweet fruit the milder sun of Italy brought to the highest maturity!

This people, from whom has proceeded the revolution in the mode of thought of Europe, whose intellectual power is testified by the greatest discoveries, who have given laws to the heavens, who of all have most deeply studied the earth; in whom nature has implanted an unperturbed sense of right, and a love of the knowledge of first causes, deeper than in any other—this people, must endow a characteristic art.

If the state of art is dependent upon the universal fate of the human mind, with what hope may we contemplate our peculiar fatherland, where a noble governor has given to the

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understanding freedom, to the spirit wings, and realization to the ideas of philanthropy; while a pure people still preserve the living germs of ancient art, and with them the ancient seats of old German art.

The very arts and sciences, were they elsewhere universally banished, would find an asylum under the shelter of that throne on which mild wisdom directs the sceptre; which graciousness as a queen adorns; which an hereditary love of art makes illustrious; by which the young prince, who this day receives the acclamation of a grateful country, has become the wonder of foreign nations; here would they find the seed of a future and vigorous existence universally diffused; here already proved community of feeling, and firm among the changes of time, at least the bond of one love, of one universal enthusiasm; of that for the fatherland and for the king, for whose health and preservation, to the utmost limit of human years, can, to-day, more ardent wishes nowhere rise than in this temple, which he has erected to the sciences.

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